

## ***LET'S GET THESE KIDS IN COLLEGE!***

### ***Higher Education Opportunities for Youth in Out-Of-Home Care***

*Education is the key to everything a youth could want or need. It can lead an individual on a path that is limited only by the individual. Services, programs and advice highlighted below can contribute greatly to a young person's success by encouraging him or her to achieve higher levels of education and training.*

#### **PLAN & PREPARE FOR COLLEGE!**

Pursuit of higher education can be a challenge requiring youth to plan and prepare as early as middle school. Youth should be encouraged to take advantage of workshops and resources designed to inform and promote pursuit of post secondary educational opportunities. School counselors in middle and high schools are a great resource for students and parents. Contact school, college and university staff and ask them to do presentations for youth. Enclosed is a copy of a brochure, *Gearing Up for College*, designed to provide simple and straightforward advice for college planning. A wealth of information and links to additional Web sites with college planning information can be found on the Internet at <http://uwhelp.wisconsin.edu>

#### **PRECOLLEGE! PRECOLLEGE! PRECOLLEGE!**

Precollege programs are available in a wealth of recreational and academic areas. Hundreds of precollege programs are available throughout Wisconsin. These programs have a proven track record of helping students think about, plan for and enter post secondary programs. For information on precollege programs and opportunities, talk with school counselors, call the HELP office at (800) 442-6459, call the Department of Public Instruction at (608) 267-9161 or use the searchable database of Wisconsin precollege programs on the Web at <http://uwhelp.wisconsin.edu/precollege>

#### **ENCOURAGE - DON'T DISCOURAGE!**

Not all youth are going to pursue a Bachelor's degree, but they may be successful in a technical college or vocational program. Help youth explore all kinds of options and opportunities that help provide a more secure future. Have youth check out the LYFE On-line (Linking Youth For Excellence) Web site at [www.lyfeonline.org](http://www.lyfeonline.org). This interactive Web site features great information and fun college planning tools, delivered via three different age groups, designed to encourage youth to "DO COLLEGE".

#### **TECHNICAL COLLEGES AND CAREERS!**

The need for technical education is on the rise! Two thirds of the fastest growing occupations require technical education. Wisconsin Technical Colleges offer more than 300 career education programs at 16 different colleges throughout the state. No program takes longer than two years of full-time study and many require a year or less. Many great educational choices exist that lead to great careers.

Technical colleges are also an option for students who need to build their academic skills. Some students have difficulty succeeding if they go directly from high school to a four-year institution. Technical college may be a good first step for these youth. Check out the Wisconsin Technical College Web site at <http://www.witechcolleges.com>. Contact the technical college in your area or call (800) 320-tech (8324).

**DCFS SCHOLARSHIP  
FUND!**

The Division of Children and Family Services provides scholarships to youth formerly in out-of-home-care placements. Scholarship funds are available for tuition and room and board expenses for post secondary education and training programs and are easy to access. For information about scholarships, contact DCFS (608) 266-5330 or access the scholarship form at <http://www.dhfs.state.wi.us/forms/DCFS/CFS2197.pdf>.

**PRIVATE  
SCHOLARSHIPS!**

Some colleges and universities in your area may have special scholarships for youth. Marian College in Fond du Lac offers a scholarship specifically for youth who were in foster care! Contact colleges and universities of interest to learn more about scholarship awards and let them know what schools like Marian College are doing. For more information about scholarship opportunities, visit <http://fastweb.com>

**FINANCIAL AID!**

The only thing more expensive than going to college is NOT going to college! Youth coming from foster homes are generally considered independent and are eligible for a significant amount of federal and state financial assistance. WEOP (Wisconsin Educational Opportunity Program) provides great information about state scholarships, loans, grants and other aid to students. Students are advised to initiate early contact with WEOP offices no later than the junior year in high school.

**WISCONSIN  
EDUCATIONAL  
OPPORTUNITY  
PROGRAM  
(WEOP)!**

In addition to financial aid information, students, parents and school counselors can participate in other opportunities and services provided by WEOP. Services and programs may include post secondary counseling, campus tours, ACT preparation, financial aid counseling, help with completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and more! WEOP staff are ready, willing and able to assist students with college planning and other program opportunities like Talent Search, Gear Up and precollege program enrollment. WEOP Offices are located in Ashland, Eau Claire, Green Bay, Madison, Milwaukee, Racine and Wausau. Access local contact information through the DPI-WEOP Web site @ [www.dpi.state.wi.us](http://www.dpi.state.wi.us) or call (414) 227-4466 or (608) 266-1636.

**ADVISORS!**

Educational advisors are a phone call away! Contact the University of Wisconsin System HELP office (800) 442-6459 to ask any question related to educational planning.